



Office of Title I Academic Support

Districts in Improvement Year 1

Workbook

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Great Lakes East Comprehensive Center at Learning Point Associates

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Section I: The No Child Left Behind Act

In 1965, President Lyndon Johnson established the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) as the federal law regarding public schools. This initial law included the creation of the Title I program for students of poverty. Since that time, subsequent presidents supplemented, redesigned, and extended the law, often under a new name. For example, President Clinton authorized ESEA as the “Improving America’s Schools Act.” President George W. Bush redesigned the law as the “No Child Left Behind Act” and framed it around four pillars:

- Accountability for results
- Expanded parental options
- Doing what works based on scientific research
- Expanded local control; flexibility

Under NCLB, schools and schools districts are held accountable for student achievement. When achievement levels are not met, the districts are placed into one of several levels of improvement status. Each state department of education developed a unique process for measuring student achievement and for determining the acceptable improvement rates.

Indiana’s Terminology for Determining District Improvement

Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) developed a statistical process for determining student achievement rates at both the school and school district levels. The process includes several terms specific to Indiana’s implementation of NCLB.

Safe Harbor

Safe harbor is a special provision that is achieved when the number of students not meeting performance targets is reduced by 10 percent (being “in safe harbor”) and when attendance and graduation rate targets are met within one or more grade spans.

Confidence Interval

The confidence interval is the performance target for each group of students at a school. For greater statistical accuracy, the confidence interval fluctuates depending on the number of students in each group.

Participation Rate

The requirement is that at least 95 percent of students in each student group must participate in the statewide assessment to make adequate yearly progress (AYP).

Content Exclusion

Content exclusion means that the level of improvement status (e.g., in improvement, in corrective action) does not advance if the content area (English/language arts or mathematics) in which the students do not make AYP is different from one year to the next.



	Pupils	English	English	Math	Math	Other Indicator		Safe Harbor			95% Part.	
			Conf Int		Conf Int	'04	'05	Engl	Math	Other	Lang	Math
8800 XYZ School Corporation *												
Overall, Elementary	2217	71.8	63.4	71.1	61.9							
Overall, Middle School	2177	66.7	63.3	69.7	61.9							
Overall, High School	1382	62.0 *	62.7	64.1	61.3	93.59	93.53 *	N		N		
Black, Elementary	250	58.0 *	58.7	52.2 *	57.2			N	N	Y		
Black, Middle School	292	49.0 *	59.2	47.9 *	57.8			Y	N	Y		
Black, High School	161	43.5 *	57.0	38.2 *	55.5	93.86	93.08	Y	Y	N		
Hispanic, Elementary	78	41.0 *	53.2	47.4 *	51.7			N	N	Y		
Hispanic, Middle School	92	42.4 *	54.2	50.5 *	52.7			N	Y	Y		
Hispanic, High School	43	32.6 *	48.8	45.2 *	47.3			N	N	Y		
White, Elementary	1744	75.1	63.1	75.1	61.6							
White, Middle School	1668	71.4	63.0	75.0	61.6							
White, High School	1099	65.9	62.4	68.8	60.9							
Free Lunch, Elementary	951	61.2 *	62.1	62.6	60.7			Y		Y		
Free Lunch, Middle School	907	53.4 *	62.0	55.9 *	60.6		94.17	Y	Y	N		
Free Lunch, High School	475	47.4 *	60.6	49.8 *	59.2		91.65	N	Y	N	94.0%*	
Limited Eng, Elementary	39	12.8 *	48.0	28.2 *	46.4			N	N	Y		
Limited Eng, Middle School	36	16.7 *	47.3	27.8 *	45.7			N	N	Y	< 40 Enr	
Limited Eng, High School	31	12.9 *	45.8	22.6 *	44.2			Y	N	Y	< 40 Enr	
Special Ed, Elementary	365	37.5 *	59.9	46.2 *	58.5			N	N	Y		
Special Ed, Middle School	334	26.9 *	59.6	34.4 *	58.2			N	N	Y		
Special Ed, High School	244	18.9 *	58.6	26.0 *	57.2		91.55	N	Y	N	93.6%*	93.6%*
AYP History: 2002=N, 2003=N, 2004=N												
Title 1 AYP History: 2002=Y, 2003=N, 2004=N, Title 1 Corporation Improvement=Year 1												

Activity#1: Did Our District Make AYP?

➡ **Directions:** Using your district's AYP Grade Span Report, circle the student groups that did not meet AYP. How does a district not meet AYP?

1. By not meeting one or more student performance targets (or, safe harbor) for student subgroups in all three grade spans (elementary, middle, and high school), and/or
2. By not meeting 95 percent participation rate for students in all three grade spans with 40 or more students, and/or
3. By not meeting attendance rate targets for students in all three grade spans.

➤ **Note:** If this year's AYP Grade Span Reports are not yet available, using last year's data should serve as a good indication of the upcoming results.

Table 1. Our Student Groups Not Meeting AYP

Student Groups	Elementary		Middle School		High School	
Black	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics
Hispanic	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics
White	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics
Free/reduced-price lunch	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics
Limited English	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics
Special education	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics	E/LA	Mathematics
Participation	Met	Did not meet	Met	Did not meet	Met	Did not meet
Attendance	Met	Did not meet	Met	Did not meet	Met	Did not meet

➡ **Directions:** Under Indiana's Title I Differentiated Accountability Model, schools are indentified according to those with greatest needs: focused and comprehensive. List your corresponding schools below:

Our focused schools:

Our comprehensive schools:

Activity #2: What Does NCLB Require If a District Does Not Make AYP?

The U.S. Department of Education developed guidelines for state departments of education, local education agencies (LEAs) and districts, and schools as related to school and district improvement. *LEA and School Improvement: Non-Regulatory Guidance* (U.S. Department of Education, 2006) is crucial to understanding the requirements and processes of improvement. Therefore, a copy is provided to you today.

The document follows a question-and-answer format with initial sections containing school improvement and restructuring, followed by LEA improvement and LEA corrective action.

- **Directions:** Divide the following pages in the document across team members. Read the assigned pages to answer the questions. Discuss the answers and their implications for your district with the whole team. “Code” refers to the letter-number reference, e.g., J-3, in the document.

Table 2. Requirements According to Nonregulatory Guidance

Pages 42–46—Question	Code	Answer	How Does This Affect or Impact Our District?
1. Which districts fall into improvement status?			
2. Why is it possible for a district to be in improvement status even though it has no schools in improvement? <u>Case Study:</u> District A has four elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school, none of which is in school improvement. Is it possible for the district to be in improvement?			
3a. What actions must IDOE, Title I take regarding notification? 3b. What actions must your district take regarding notification? 3c. How will parents be notified that the district is in improvement?			

Pages 46–47—Question	Code	Answer	How Does This Affect or Impact Our District?
4. What is the purpose of your improvement plan?			
5. What must your plan include? <u>Case Study:</u> District B has a district strategic plan. Can it serve as the LEA improvement plan?			
6. When must your plan be implemented?			
Pages 47–48—Question	Code	Answer	How Does This Affect or Impact Our District?
7. How will you pay for high-quality professional development? <u>Case Study:</u> District C’s high school does not receive Title I funding. Yet, the teachers need the same professional development that the Title I elementary schools are receiving. Is it appropriate to use Title I funds for the training of the high school teachers?			
8. What must the IDOE, Title I do to support your district?			
9. How does your district exit from improvement status?			
Page 49—Question	Code	Answer	How Does This Affect or Impact Our District?
10. What actions must the IDOE take for LEAs in Year 3 of improvement/corrective action?			

NCLB: Requirements of Districts in Improvement and Corrective Action

Table 3 provides an overview of the LEA requirements for each year in improvement. Notice that in Year 3, the district begins the process of mapping and aligning its English/language arts and/or mathematics curriculum.

Table 3. LEA Requirements for Each Year in Improvement

District Responsibilities	Year 1 in Improvement	Year 2 in Improvement	Year 3 in Improvement (in corrective action)	Year 4 and Beyond (in corrective action)
LEA Improvement/ Action Plan	✓ Develop new	✓ Review previous year's plan and make changes as needed	✓ Revise previous year's plan with emphasis on curriculum	✓ Revise previous year's plan with continued emphasis on curriculum
10% Title I funds for professional development, generally related to curriculum, instruction, formative assessments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Notify parents and public	✓	✓	✓	✓
Map, align, and implement new or revised English/language arts and/or mathematics curriculum developed with all schools and teacher participating			✓	✓

- *Discussion:* Consider which stakeholders in the district, schools, and community need to understand the requirements and steps of being a district in improvement. Discuss how and when to share this information with various stakeholders.

Section II: Becoming a High-Performing District

Components of High-Performing School Districts: The Research and Best Practices

What is meant by the phrase “high-performing school district”? Who or what is performing at a high level in these districts? Most of us would answer that it is the students that are to be high-performing. But this answer begs another question: Is that enough? After all, how do students become high-performing? It happens through the guidance and the support of the adults in their lives: parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, and others. It happens through the curriculum and instruction that the teachers provide to the students: the learning experiences, the level of challenge and rigor, the teachers’ expectations. Everyone and every process in the educational system must operate at the optimal levels of demand, consistency, and integrity for school districts to be high-performing.

With this broader view, we must expand the question of “What do students do to become high-performing?” to “What do school and district personnel do that leads to each student achieving at the highest level possible for him or her?” Fortunately, the answers are available through studies of the characteristics or components that occur in high-performing school districts. Numerous books and articles reveal that certain components of successful schools/districts repeatedly emerge in the literature (see online appendix). Although the wording varies from author to author, with some indicating six, seven, or eight components, the components are basically the same. For our purposes, we have compiled the results of the research into the eight components of high-performing, high-poverty districts:

1. Vision, Goals, Mission

- Is focused on student learning
- Includes a belief that all students can achieve to high expectations
- Is widely accepted by teachers and administrators

2. Leadership

- Is shared with teachers and staff through school leadership teams and other teams that have the authority to make meaningful decisions
- Is focused on improving instruction to increase student learning
- Occurs at the school and district levels

3. Use of Data and Formative Assessments

- Is used by teachers on a daily or weekly basis to make instructional decisions
- Enables analysis of student learning to determine additional supports needed

4. Instruction

- Is research-based and/or based on best practices
- Is engaging and cognitively demanding
- Is differentiated for individual and groups of students

5. Curriculum

- Is developed by teachers (bottom-up) through extensive discussions of teaching, learning, and underlying meaning of the state standards
- Is cohesive and coherent at school and district levels and is aligned to the state standards and within and across grade levels

6. Professional Development

- Is of extensive length (about 50 hours a year [Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009])
- Is sustained (same topic presented multiple times)
- Is content- and instruction-focused, and classroom-based
- Is collaborative, occurring with partners and teams and includes coaching/mentoring

7. Parent, Family, and Community Involvement

- Is active and inclusive with efforts to increase parents' comfort level in being involved with the school
- Is focused on developing parents' skills to support student learning

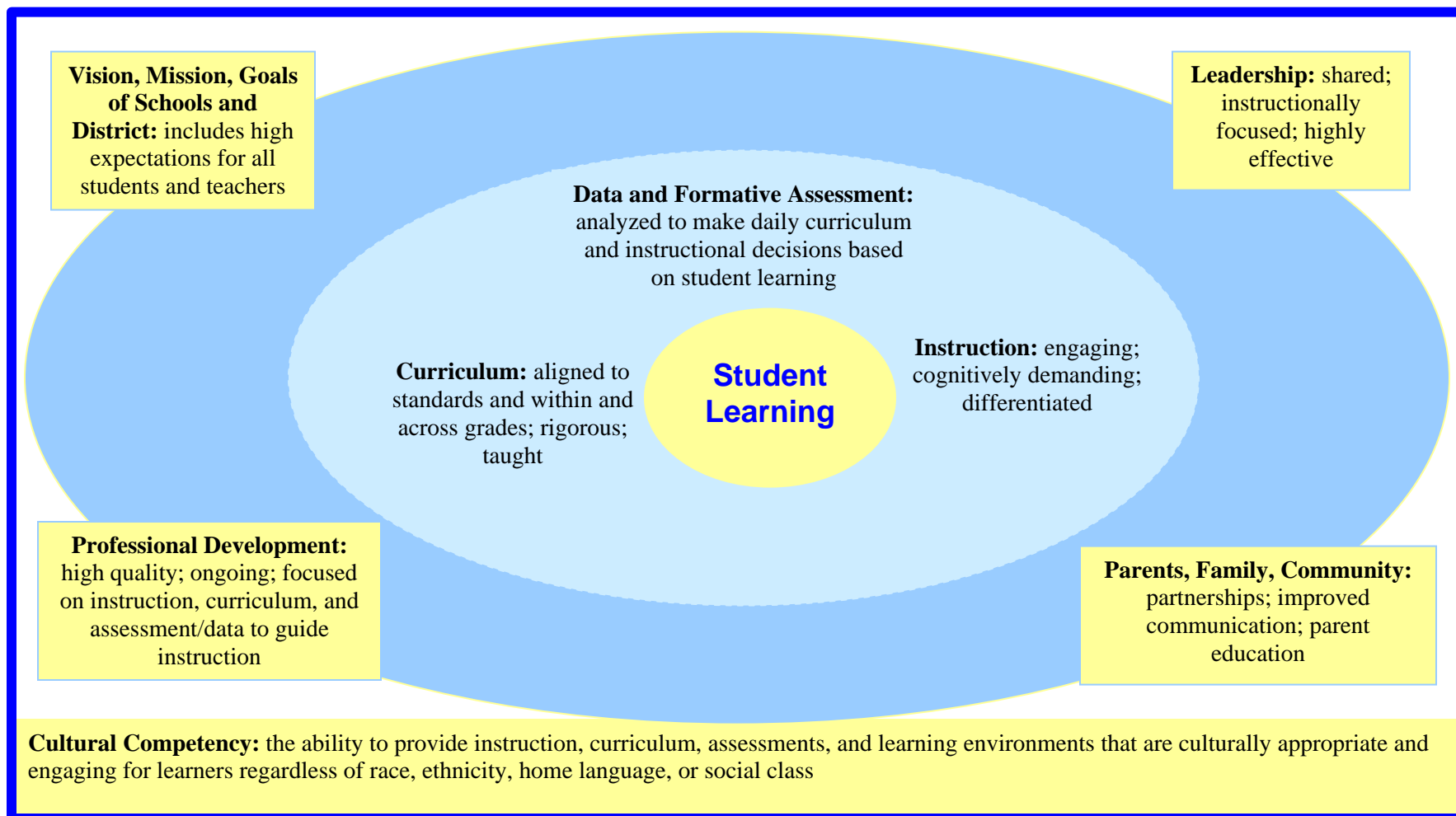
8. Culture Competency

- Is demonstrated in the district, schools, and classrooms with students, colleagues, parents, and the community interactions with one another
- Is the ability to provide instruction, curriculum, assessments, and learning environments that are culturally appropriate and engaging for learners regardless of their race, ethnicity, home language, or social class
- Results in the educator "having the skill and the will to demonstrate these behaviors:
 - Values the learner as a thinker and doer
 - Honors and respects cultural identities of all learners
 - Designs experiences that build on prior knowledge and experiences of the learners
 - Understands assessment bias
 - Holds high expectations for each learner
 - Presents rigorous, standards-based content
 - Selects materials and resources that reflect multicultural perspectives
 - Manages the dynamics of difference
 - Values diversity and inclusion" (Robins, Lindsey, Lindsey, & Terrell, 2006, p. 32–33)

Figure 1. IDOE, Title I: Theory of Action for Indiana High-Poverty School and Districts: Moving to High Performance

The IDOE, Office of Title I Academic Support holds a set of beliefs—described as a *theory of action*—based on the research and best practices of high-performing, high-poverty schools and districts. The components of the theory of action do not merely “exist” in high-performing schools. Rather, through the district’s support, the components are of high quality and implemented with consistency and

fidelity in all schools with special attention to academically-struggling student groups. In addition, assisting the IDOE, Office of Title I Academic Support provides supports to schools and districts in improvement that focus on the three components in the innermost circle of the theory of action: data and formative assessment, instruction, and curriculum.



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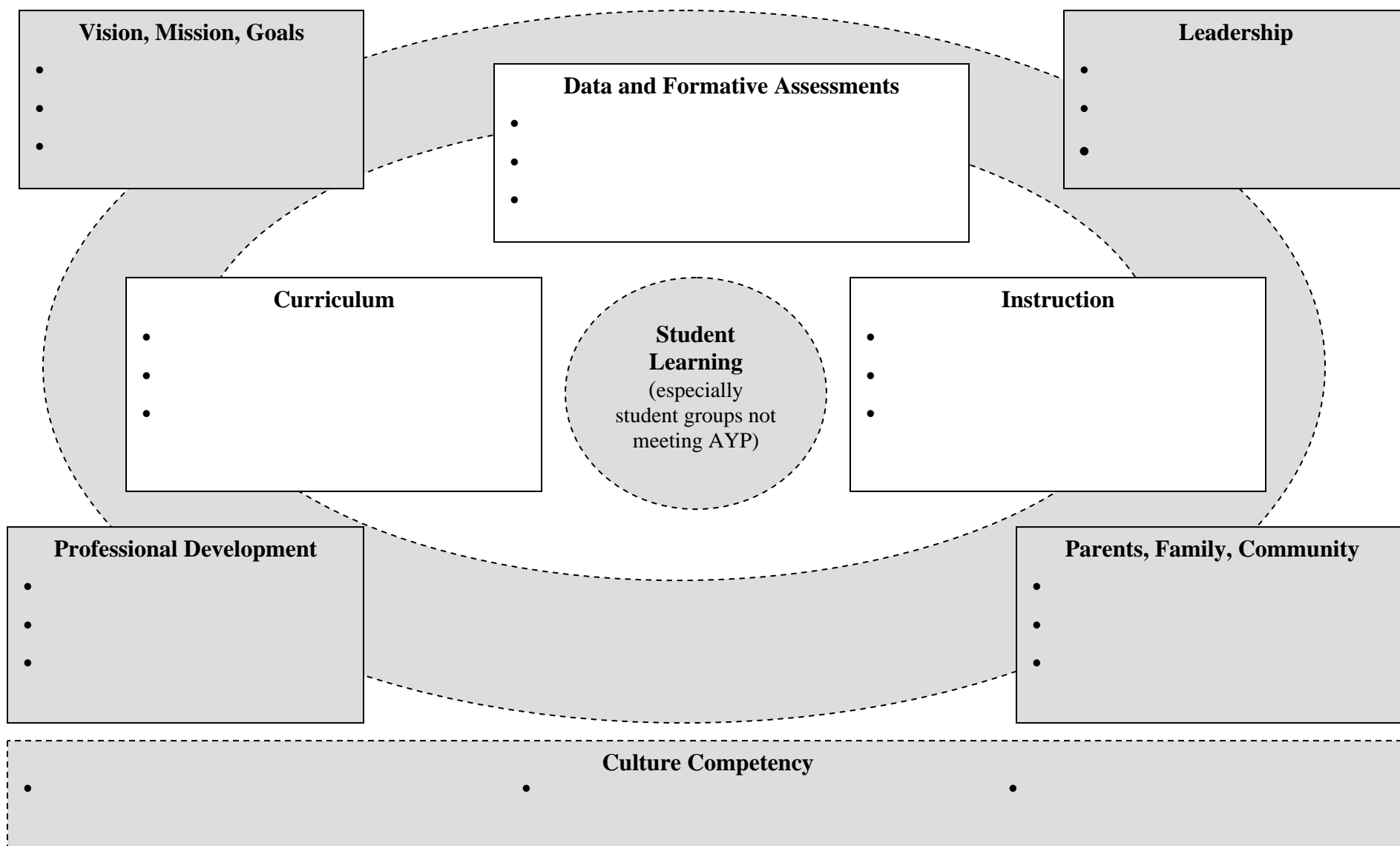
For additional references, see *Research and Literature Review: High-Poverty, High-Performing School Districts* in the online appendix.

Activity #3: How Does Our District Support Our Schools? Using the Theory of Action

➡ Directions:

1. Divide the components of high-performing, high-poverty districts among pairs of team members.
2. Using the Theory of Action shown in Figure 2 (page 9), list the ways that the district supports the schools for the selected component. For example, under “leadership,” “Principals mentored monthly by experienced principals of successful high-poverty schools” could be written.
3. Write your answers on chart paper.
4. After all components and district supports are listed on chart paper, conduct a “Carousel Review.” In pairs, team members rotate to each paper and add additional supports they are aware of that are provided by the district to the schools. Continue to rotate until all members have reviewed all papers.
5. As a group, address the following questions:
 - a. In which areas do we quantitatively provide the most support to our schools?
 - b. What evidence do we have that those supports are effective, defined here as “changing teachers’ and principals’ attitudes, skills, and behaviors”? On a scale of 1 to 5, what level of evidence do we have of the effectiveness of the support? (Place that number on the chart paper.)
 - c. In which areas are we not providing the amount of support to schools that we should be doing?
 - d. How might this area correspond to the requirement of the LEA improvement plan to “include a determination of why the LEA’s previous plan did not bring about increased student academic achievement?” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 47).
 - e. Are there areas where perhaps too much “support” is being given, requiring teachers to implement many programs at once? If so, when developing the district improvement plan, consider removing those initiatives and focusing on the programs that have data to support their effectiveness.

Figure 2. Activity #3: How Does Our District Support Our Schools? Using the Theory of Action



Activity #4: How Does Our District Support Our Schools? Self-Assessment

In Activity #3, we considered the supports your district provides to your schools. Another way to examine those supports is through a self-assessment tool that describes the components of high-performing districts. The information gained from the self-assessment tool (see Table 4) will assist in developing the actions needed in the district improvement plan.

The self-assessment tool is a compilation of rubrics developed by several state departments of education and educational organizations. The components are given in stages or phases that represent a district's progress from beginning to high-performing stages. Additional sources of district and school self-assessments are listed in the online appendix..

☞ *Directions:*

1. In pairs, select a component and read the statements under it. Using the continuum of 1 to 5 (with 5 being a high-performing district), rate your district by circling the “X” in the appropriate column.
2. Ask “What evidence do we have that supports this rating?” Reconsider your rating if written or hard evidence is not available.
3. Share your answers with the whole group and highlight those areas with the lowest ratings. Return to this self-assessment tool when developing the improvement plan later in the day.

Table 4. Self-Assessment Tool: Components of High-Performing District

Component	Components Level 1—Beginning	Continuum			Components Level 5—High-Performing
		2	3	4	
1. Vision, Mission, Goals	X <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does not exist.• Is not current.• Teachers do not know it exists or do not believe what it espouses.• Is not related to student learning.	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed by all staff within past few years.• Includes high expectations for all.• Includes all teachers being responsible for all students' learning.

2. Leadership	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals spend most of their time managing the school. • Principals are rarely in classrooms. • Principals are not knowledgeable about E/LA or mathematics instruction. • District provides no support to principals regarding instruction. 	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals are highly knowledgeable of E/LA and mathematics instruction. • Principals conduct frequent walk-throughs. • Principals assist teachers in their instruction. • Principals share leadership task through teams, professional learning communities, etc.
Component	Components Level 1—Beginning	2	3	4	Components Level 5—High-Performing
3. Data and Formative Assessments	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers rarely receive district data or receive it late. • Teachers and principals do not know how to disaggregate data for instructional purposes. • Teachers do not examine student work together. • Teachers do not use formative classroom assessments. 	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/school is “data rich”—i.e., data are readily available and timely. • Teachers (not only data coaches) are capable of disaggregating data. • Teachers meet regularly in groups to discuss student work. • Teachers routinely use formative assessments to guide instruction.
4. Instruction	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction is primarily lecture- and teacher-centered. • Instruction places the same cognitive demands on all learners. • Instruction is primarily textbook-oriented and lacks student engagement. • Technology is rarely used by teachers and/or students. • Teachers do not meet in or across grade-level teams to discuss and improve their instruction. 	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction includes a variety of methods that are student-centered. • Instruction provides various levels of cognitive demands to correspond to learners’ experiences, abilities, and interests. • Textbooks are one of many supports; technology is used frequently to engage learners. • Teachers know how to alter instruction (differentiate) for struggling students. • Teachers meet regularly in groups to discuss their instructional practices.

5. Curriculum	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum does not exist or is defined as state standards or pacing guides. Teachers do not meet in or across grade levels teams to develop curriculum based on the state standards. Students with special needs or who are learning English are not present in the regular classroom during core instruction time, and thus do not have access to the school curriculum. Curriculum offers a one-culture view of the world. 	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum is developed by teachers based on determining the underlying meaning of the state standards. Curriculum aligns within and across grade levels. Curriculum is rigorous and cognitively demanding. All students have access to the curriculum through adequate time in the regular classroom. Teachers know how to alter the curriculum for struggling students Curriculum includes viewpoints from various cultures.
Component	Components Level 1—Beginning	2	3	4	Components Level 5—High-Performing
6. Professional Development	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is individually selected by each teacher; includes conferences and conventions. Is not related to curriculum, instruction, or assessment. Is short, i.e., one-shot sessions. Does not include follow-up assistance, mentoring, or monitoring of classroom implementation. 	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is developed long-term; focuses on improving curriculum, instruction, and formative assessments. Includes multiple sessions, follow-up coaching, or mentoring in classroom. Focuses on teachers developing appropriate instructional skills for struggling student group. Includes accountability as principal monitors for quality and consistency of classroom implementation.
7. Parents, Families, and Communities	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on parent–teacher meetings. Does not provide assistance to parents in helping their children academically. Does not provide unique experiences for parents of students who are struggling. 	X	X	X	X <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets aside specific times only for the parents of students who are not meeting AYP and those times are beyond what is required by law. Assists parents in learning how to help their children academically. Provides written translation and oral interpretation for parents who do not speak English.

Component	Components Level 1—Beginning	2	3	4	Components Level 5—High-Performing
8. Cultural Competency	<p>X</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds the belief that all students learn the same way, instructing all students in similarly. • Uses the textbook to determine the focus of study. • “Cultural instruction” is limited to study of flags, festivals, and foods of countries/people. • Uses nicknames for learners whose names are difficult to pronounce. • Does not investigate students’ level of education prior to coming to the United States; their home languages; or the political and economic history and conditions of their countries or groups. • Does not connect curriculum and learning to students’ own life experiences as related to race, ethnicity, or social class. 	X	X	X	<p>X</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds the belief that students learn differently and provides for by using various instructional practices. • Combines what learners need to know from the state standards and curriculum with the needs in their lives. • Provides culturally proficient instruction, allowing learners to explore cultural contexts of themselves and others. • Learns all students’ names and works to pronounce them correctly. • Investigates students’ education prior to coming to the United States; their home languages; and the political and economic history and conditions of their countries or groups. • Connects curriculum and learning to students’ own life experiences as related to race, ethnicity or class.

Section III: Knowing Our Students

Making Decisions Using Data

In Activity #1, you identified the student groups not meeting AYP. This is a good first step. We also need to know much more about these students if we are to provide the instruction most appropriate for their learning. We need more data about these students—individually—in order to make solid instructional decisions. In this section, we strive to know the students: who they are and what they need from the district and the schools through examining various types of data.

Types of Data

Perception Data. We all have perceptions or beliefs about our students' ability to learn, our own ability to teach, and our administrators' ability to lead. Gathering perceptual data allows us to learn how parents view the school or how students believe the adults at the school care about them. Perception data are based on our own experiences as well as others' experiences that are told to us, as well as the values and attitudes we hold. Examples of perception data include:

- “Our students continually move from one school to another; that is why we are not meeting AYP.”
- “Ninety percent of our students are from poverty; of course, they can't learn like the kids in the middle-class suburbs.”
- “Students in special education shouldn't be expected to pass ISTEP+. Even those students who are moderately learning disabled or in a wheelchair—they can't learn like the others.”

Although perception data can be useful, they also can be dangerous if they offer excuses as to why students are not learning. Perception data analysis needs to be followed by the question, “What evidence do we have to support this theory or perception?” When possible, multiple data sources and types of data should be utilized.

Demographic Data. Demographic data identify characteristics of people. Student demographic data include grade level, age, gender, ethnicity, race, and many other variables. As you seek to understand how to improve the learning of students not passing ISTEP+, the analysis of demographic data provides reliable findings and is useful in examining the accuracy of perceptual data.

Summative Assessment Data. Summative assessments do simply that—they “summarize” student learning over time. They include assessments that occur at the end of a course, at the end of a semester, or once a year (such as ISTEP+). Although they are defined as summative, such assessments are limited because they essentially are single snapshots of student learning at one point in time. Although summative assessment data are useful for identifying groups of students who are struggling or specific schools that need attention, they are not useful for determining specific student learning needs.

Formative Assessment Data. Assessments that focus on determining student learning step-by-step or goal-by-goal are termed formative assessments. The results from such assessments allow teachers to know which students learned the information or skills and to what extent or level. Good formative assessments allow the teacher to understand where in the cognitive process the student was overly challenged. Formative assessments may be teacher-developed or purchased programs, such as “Acuity” and “Wireless Generation.” Formative assessments are critical for instructional decision-making.

Determining the Quality of the Data

With the passage of NCLB, data have taken on a new emphasis. Data are needed to make good decisions and to provide accountability for those decisions. The quality of the data is paramount. Teachers and administrators need to consider not only the data but the *reliability* and *validity* of those data. Is the test measuring what it was intended to measure? Was it collected fairly? Was it analyzed correctly?

Reliability refers to the extent to which the student would receive the same score on repeated administrations of the tests or assessments. A test is considered reliable if it yields the same results over several repeated trials by the same student.

Validity refers to the extent to which the test or assessment measures what the test developer intended to measure. For example, let’s say that a student with limited English language skills recently arrives in the United States and subsequently takes a social studies chapter test. The test results are not valid because the test did not measure the student’s social studies knowledge; rather, it measured the student’s knowledge of the English language.

Activity #5: Which Data Sources Will Tell Us About Our Struggling Students?

➊ *Directions:* Tables 5–8 will be used for this activity. Select one of your student groups not meeting AYP: students receiving free and reduced lunch (Title I), students in special education, or students learning English as an additional language (often referred to as English Language Learners or ELL).

1. Consider each data source listed. As a group, write in the name of the district document that contains the data in column 2 and who in the district holds the document in column 3).
2. Variables indicated with an asterisk are especially important to disaggregate. Data abbreviations and codes are shown in Table 8.

Table 5. Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch—Title I

Variable (Percentage—Numbers)	Data Source/ Name of Document	District Person Holding Document
Total students by school; by grade		
*Attendance rates in regular school day by school; by grade level		
Attendance rates in extended school day by school; by grade		
Participation rate on ISTEP+ by school; by grade		
Are English language learners		
*Are enrolled in special education		
*Discipline and suspension rates by school; by grade level		
Graduation and drop out rates by school; by grade		

Table 6. Students Enrolled in Special Education

Variable (Percentage—Numbers)	Data Source/ Name of Document	District Person Holding Document
Total students by school; by grade		
*Attendance rates by school; by grade		
Participation rate on ISTEP+ by school; by grade		

Variable (Percentage—Numbers)	Data Source/ Name of Document	District Person Holding Document
Are English language learners		
* By disability category; by school; by grade level (see Table 8)		
* By disability in various educational environments (LRE) (see page 21)		
*Discipline and suspension rates by school; by grade level		
*Graduation and drop out rates by disability, age, and other variables		

Table 7. Students Enrolled as Learners of English (ELL)

Variable (Percentage—Numbers)	Data Source/ Name of Document	District Person Holding Document
Total students by school; by grade		
Attendance rates by school; by grade		
*Participation rate on ISTEP+ by school; by grade		
Are enrolled in special education		
* By instructional program (see page 22)		
* By length of time in program		
* By English proficiency level (see page 21)		
*By home language (see page 21)		
*Discipline and suspension rates by school; by grade level		
Graduation and drop out rates by disability, age, and other variables		

Data Abbreviations and Codes

Students With Disabilities

Table 8. Disability Categories

AUT	Autism spectrum disorder	MI	Mild mental disability
CD	Communication disorder	MO	Moderate mental disability
DSI	Dual sensory impairment (deaf-blind)	MH	Multiple disabilities
DD	Developmental delay (early childhood)	OI	Orthopedic impairment
EHFT	Emotional disability (full time)	OHI	Other health impairment
EHAO	Emotional disability (all others)	SP	Severe profound mental disability
HI	Hearing impairment	TBI	Traumatic brain injury
LD	Learning disability	VI	Visual impairment

Placement in Educational Environments

Schools and districts report students' placement in learning environment in terms of the amount of time spend in the regular classroom. When students are not in the regular classroom, they are in therapy rooms, resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, or separate schools or placements. When students are in the regular classroom, they potentially have more access to the school/district curriculum. Therefore, when examining the data of students with disabilities, it is important to note the amount of time each student spends in the classroom as an indication of exposure to the regular curriculum. The amount of time in the classroom is designated on students' individualized education plans (IEPs) as:

- Removed from regular class less than 21 percent of the day
- Removed from regular class greater than 60 percent of the day
- Served in public or private separate schools, residential placements, or homebound or hospital placements

Students Learning English As an Additional Language (or ELL)

Level of English Proficiency.

- LEP: Limited English Proficient
- FEP: Fluent English Proficient

Language Codes.

- Spanish
- For a list of all language codes, see:
http://www.doe.state.in.us/lmmp/pdf/lm_language_code_sheet.pdf

Instructional Programs.

- Transitional Bilingual Education
- ESL program
- Pull-out ESL
- Content-based ESL
- Regular education program
- English to speakers of other languages (ESOL)
- Sheltered English
- Structured immersion

For a list of definitions of the above, see <http://www.doe.in.gov/stn/pdf/LM.pdf>. Scroll down to “Field Order 13”

Activity #6: What Can We Learn About Our Struggling Students?

Examining data about students is central to developing and implementing an improvement plan “to address the deficiencies in the LEA that prevent students ... from achieving” and to “address the fundamental teaching and learning needs ... especially the academic problems of low-achieving students” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 46). Through this activity, you will examine student data to develop data findings related to your struggling students.

➡ *Directions:* Complete the following steps using the data provided by IDOE, Office of Title I Academic Support and/or data that you brought with you. Work in pairs or small groups to complete Table 9.

1. Select a student group to examine.
2. Review the data source and determine various ways to disaggregate the data in order to divide the students into smaller groups and provide more detailed information.
3. Select two variables (e.g., grade level, disability category, placement in regular classrooms, level of English proficiency, attendance rate) that are the most likely to determine which students are in greatest need.
4. Examine the data, comparing the two variables. When returning home, be sure to examine this same data at the school level in addition to the district level and disaggregate further.
5. Develop findings—a short phrase that summarizes the examination of the data.
 - Findings do not offer explanations or probable causes; they simply state the facts from the data.
 - Findings include observations, patterns, and trends.
 - A single data source will yield multiple findings.
6. Discuss the questions at the end of the activity.

◆ Data Source Tip

Do you want to know how a group of students scored on ISTEP+ in an ELA strand, such as reading comprehension?

- Go to ASAP and select “Corporation Snapshot.”
- Go to “Delve Deeper into the Data.”
- Select “Standards Drilldown” and then “Student Subgroup

**Table 9. Activity #6: What Can We Learn About Our Struggling Students?
Disaggregating Student Data**

Student Group	Data Source	Variable #1	Variable #2	Findings
<i>Example:</i> Students With Disabilities	Student count by grade, 2008	Disability category	Grade level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of students with disabilities dramatically decreases at Grades 3 and 4 due to students with communication disorders (CD) being exited out. 2. The number of students identified as having an emotional disability full-time (EMFT): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dramatically increases at Grades 7 and 8. • Includes 75% more boys than girls. • Pronounced increase of absenteeism in Grade 7 and beyond.

Student Group	Data Source	Variable #1	Variable #2	Findings

Activity #6: What Can We Learn About Our Struggling Students? (continued)

➤ *Directions:* Each group presents the findings to the whole group, writing them on chart paper. Remember to focus only on the findings; the potential reasons and causes will be discussed later.

1. Which findings correspond to “the academic problems of low-achieving students” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 46)?
2. Which of the findings particularly “address the deficiencies in the LEA that prevent students ... from achieving”(U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 46)?
3. Based on answers to Questions 1 and 2, which findings cause the district the greatest concern? Place an asterisk beside those findings.
4. Which, if any, of the findings were not expected? Why? Do the findings conflict with perception data?
5. What patterns or trends emerged?
6. What other student groups are not meeting AYP? Will our district need to develop data findings when we return home?

Section IV: Our Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessments

From the data findings, we can determine which students are struggling, at what grade levels, with what disabilities or levels of English skills, and in which reading or mathematics standards. With this information, we turn to examining our district's and schools' use of formative assessments and data to make instructional decisions, use of a well-aligned, rigorous English/language arts curriculum, and use of research-based instructional practices specific for the students who are struggling (see IDOE, Title I Theory of Action, page 9).

Activity #7: Examining Our Curriculum: Do We Have One?

As defined by Bredenkamp and Rosegrant (1995), a *curriculum* is:

An organized framework that delineates the **content** that children are to learn, the **processes** through which children achieve the identified curriculum **goals**, what **teachers do** to help children achieve these goals, and the **context** in which teaching and learning occur (p. 16, emphasis added).

To clarify the meaning further, Table 10 identifies what a curriculum is and what it is not.

Table 10. Characteristics of a Curriculum

A Curriculum:	A Curriculum:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the “unpacking” or the interpreting of the state standards into a set of skills to be learned.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not a copy of the state standards or indicators.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is a well-conceived hierarchy of skills based on students’ cognitive, language, and social-emotional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not a scope and sequence chart from a publisher, chapter headings from a textbook, or titles of stories.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is developed by all teachers working in collaborative grade-level and content-area teams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not developed by a few people in the school or district or by a publishing or textbook company.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is a planning and teaching tool that affects instruction and is adapted and differentiated to correspond to the needs and strengths of the learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not a document that sits on a shelf and never changes.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Includes content, skills, assessments, state standards, and other information that teachers use in their planning and teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not simply a restating of the state standards.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describes what the students need to know and be able to do.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not a description of what the teacher will do (e.g., a lesson plan).
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is aligned with the state standards and across and within grade levels and content areas with increasing cognitive difficulty at each level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is not individually unique with each teacher developing his or her own interpretation of the standards and without agreement within or across grade levels.

◆ *Discussion*

1. Which, if any, of the statements are inconsistent with your thinking or what you have been taught in the past about curriculum?
2. If the teachers in your districts were to define the word “curriculum,” would their answers adhere to the “is” or the “is not” side of the chart?
3. What are the implications for the curriculum in your district based on this definition of a curriculum?
4. Based on the chart, does your district have an English/language arts and/or mathematics curriculum that is:
 - Aligned to the Indiana state standards?
 - Used regularly by teachers to guide classroom instruction?
 - Available to almost all students through access to the regular classroom? Carefully consider the amount of exposure students with disabilities and students learning English have to the grade-level curriculum.

Activity #8: Why Is a Curriculum Important?

➤ *Directions:* Read the story below and answer the questions.

The door hit the wall hard as the twins burst into the house. “Mom, we got our report cards today!” they shouted. Sharing in her second-graders’ excitement, Mom quickly opens the cards. But something is wrong. Lucy, who is the stronger writer of the two, received a checkmark under “Needs significant improvement.” Luke, on the other hand, received “Mastered.” Mom carefully reads the state standard alongside the checkmarks: “Writes a brief description of a familiar object, person, place, or event that: (a) develops a main idea and (b) uses details to support the main idea” (Indiana standard 2.5.2). Baffled by the results, Mom makes appointments to meet with the twins’ teachers the next day.

◆ *Discussion:* What are some possible reasons that Luke received a higher mark on this standard than his sister?

During the conference, both teachers provide examples of the children’s homework, simple book reports, and reading diaries that were used to determine their grades. Both teachers also share a checklist or rubric they use to grade the student work for this standard, as shown in Table 11:

Table 11. Checklist for Grading Student Work

Luke’s Teacher: Checklist	Lucy’s Teacher: Checklist
1. Copies the main idea from the reading.	1. Writes original sentence presenting the main idea.
2. Rewrites two details from the reading.	2. Presents three or more details in own words.
	3. During the six-week period, writes a total of eight descriptions.
	4. Uses capital letters to begin sentences and punctuation at the end of sentences.

◆ *Discussion:* Based on the checklists, what is a probable reason that Luke received a higher mark on this standard than his sister?

The two teachers have very different expectations, even though both teach second grade. Each teacher interpreted the state writing standard differently, with Lucy's teacher having much higher expectations of her students than Luke's teacher.

◆ *Discussion:*

1. Do you think that teachers in your school/district interpret the standards identically or differently?
2. What evidence do you have to support your opinion?

This is not an uncommon occurrence within grade levels in the same school and certainly across schools in the same district. When teachers do not meet together to interpret the meaning or skills underlying a standard, each teacher interprets the standard differently, including what it looks like when students have a basic knowledge versus mastery of the standard.

◆ *Discussion:*

1. How does the district support teachers, principals, and schools in designing a curriculum as described above?
2. What evidence exists that the curriculum is implemented consistently by all teachers?

Activity #9: What Are the Benefits of a Curriculum?

What are school districts in Indiana finding to be the benefits of a strong curriculum?

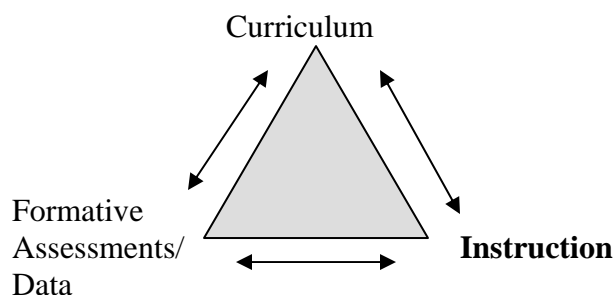
◇ Tip: Benefits of Curriculum of Designing and Implementing a Curriculum

See *Benefits of an Aligned, Rigorous Curriculum* in the online appendix for additional information. Consider sharing this information with staff, parents, and community to reach agreement as to importance of a rigorous, aligned curriculum.

Instruction: Its Role in High-Performing Districts

Although the curriculum details what the students are to know or be able to do, instruction provides how the curriculum is implemented and taught. Instruction is the second leg of the internal triangle of success for high-performing districts—curriculum, instruction, and formative assessments/data are the three sides of this important triangle, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4. The Core Components of High-Performing Districts



Instructing is the most important role of the teacher and it is an ever-evolving process as students, the classroom environment, and the content to be learned change. We simply cannot teach the same way we were taught 25 years or even five years ago. In addition, research (see online appendix) informs us about how specific types of students learn best. It becomes our task to match our instructional practices with those of our learners.

The following pages list findings from the research about the ways in which student groups often are taught, followed by discussion questions to consider. This information is important in examining teachers' current instructional practices, determining how they may or may not be supporting struggling students, and reflecting upon needed changes in the district improvement plan.

Instruction: Students From Poverty—What Does the Research Tell Us?

Research (Barr & Parrett, 2003; Barr & Parrett, 2001; Haberman, 1991; Jagers & Carroll, 2002; and Padrón, Waxman, & Rivera, 2002) tells us that students from poverty:

- Are most often instructed through the use of lecture, drill, and practice techniques.
- Have teachers who control discussions and decision making.
- Are bombarded with worksheets that require low-level cognitive skills.
- Receive lessons and assignments that are less demanding than students from the middle class.
- “Spend a remarkable amount of time making collages and posters and coloring pictures under the guides of ‘hands-on’ learning” (Barr & Parrett, 2007, p. 31).
- Are taught by the least qualified and least effective teachers.
- Have teachers who focus on their own teaching rather than on student learning.

◆ *Discussion:* Name a school in your district that enrolls mostly middle or upper socioeconomic students. Name a school that enrolls mostly low-income students.

1. Which school houses the most qualified and effective teachers in your district?
2. Which school uses innovative instructional techniques such as student projects and experiential learning?
3. Which school spends more instructional time on worksheets and drills?
4. In which school do the teachers more often plan and discuss student work together?
5. Within a middle or high school, consider the same above questions for advanced classes versus “remedial” or basic courses.
6. In general, do teachers in your district hold similar academic expectations for all students, regardless of their family’s income level?

✓ *Suggestion:* Consider your answers above when developing your district improvement/action plan. What needs to change regarding instruction for students from poverty?

Instruction: Students With Disabilities—What Do We Know?

Indiana school corporation data show that students with disabilities in Indiana:

- Often do not receive instruction in the least restrictive environment (LRE) despite the fact that mainstreaming or inclusion has been required for more than 15 years.
- Do not receive equal access to the curriculum and instruction that nondisabled students receive because they are not seated in the regular classroom most of their day.
- Are kept in classrooms and in wings of buildings or in portables that are physically separate from the general school population.
- Do not receive differentiated instruction that is appropriate for their learning needs when they are placed in regular classrooms.

◆ Discussion:

1. During the past five years, what has been your district's trend or pattern for enabling students with disabilities to move from a more restricted classroom placement (e.g., self-contained classroom) to a less restricted environment (e.g., resource room)?
2. Review the professional development provided to classroom teachers for the past five years.
 - How many hours of instruction did teachers receive regarding differentiated instruction?
 - What follow up (e.g., modeling, coaching) was provided to the teachers to increase their use of and the quality of the differentiated instruction?
 - How much time has been dedicated on a weekly basis for classroom teachers and teachers of special education to discuss student work and progress and determine instructional needs?
 - When conducting classroom walk-throughs, are principals able to recognize the quality of differentiated instruction and assist their teachers in improving their skills?

✓ *Suggestion:* Consider your answers above when developing your district improvement/action plan. What needs to change regarding instruction for students with disabilities?

Instruction: Students Learning English As an Additional Language— What Do We Know?

Learners of English or English Language Learners (ELL) or Limited English Proficient (LEP):

- Require five to seven years of strong support to learn English at the academic level, yet students often do not receive this long, intensive support.
- Receive pull-out or push-in support for a few hours a day or week rather than intensive support for the majority of the school day by a trained ESL/ELL teacher.
- Must have an individual learning plan (ILP) in the mainstream classroom to document their level of English proficiency (Levels 1–5), differentiated instruction strategies, and alternative grading and classroom assessment techniques; such plans do not always exist.
- Must annually participate in ISTEP+ to measure academic content knowledge as well as in LAS Links benchmark assessments to measure attainment of English proficiency.

◆ Discussion:

1. During the past five years, what patterns have emerged in the district in the ELL population? Has the number of students changed? Have the home languages changed?
2. How has the district responded to the changes? What types of instructional methodology was implemented in the schools (i.e., SIOP, CALLA, SDAIE)? What was the research to support the selection of the instruction? What evidence exists that it is effective?
3. Have the supports increased over the years in terms of number of hours of instruction the students receive from a trained ESL/ELL teacher?
4. Review the professional development provided to classroom teachers concerning ELL for the past five years.
 - How many hours of instruction did teachers receive regarding linguistics and cultural awareness, alternative grading, and classroom assessment techniques?
 - What follow up (e.g., modeling, coaching) was provided to teachers to increase their use of and the quality of their differentiated instructional strategies and assessments?
 - How much time is dedicated on a weekly basis for classroom teachers and teachers of ELL to discuss student work and progress and determine instructional needs?
5. How have the English Language Proficiency (ELP) Standards been integrated into regular classroom instruction and/or English language development instruction?
6. When conducting classroom walk-throughs, are principals able to recognize the quality of differentiated instruction strategies for ELLs and assist their teachers in improving?

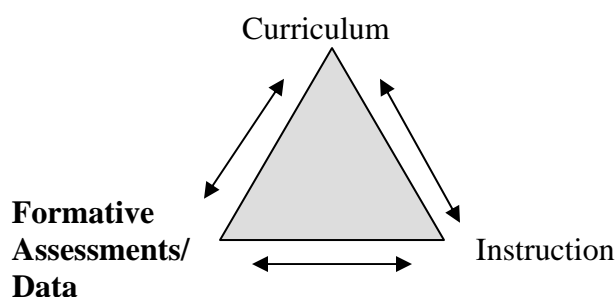
✓ *Suggestion:* Consider your answers when developing your district improvement/action plan. What needs to change regarding instruction, assessment, and grading for students who are learning English as an additional language?

Formative Assessment: Why Is It important?

When we think of assessment, we often think of ISTEP, which is a summative assessment. But educators need to focus on *formative assessments*—the daily and weekly assessments that provide teachers with the information they need to change and alter their instruction. Formative assessments, when done well, inform the teacher as to the specific piece or part of the learning that the student is struggling to grasp and that, therefore, is prohibiting mastery of the concept.

As shown in Figure 5, the curriculum initially serves as the basis for teacher instruction. However, on a daily or weekly basis, formative assessments are given, results are determined, and instruction is changed based on the learning needs of individual students.

Figure 5. The Core Components of High-Performing Districts



Developmentally Appropriate Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are inherently *developmentally appropriate*: They gather information about how the student arrived at the level of understanding by describing the thinking process rather than examining a finished product. They assist the teacher in determining the student’s developmental level for mastering the process, whether it is sorting beads by shapes and colors in Kindergarten or completing an algebraic computation in eighth grade. In addition, formative assessments focus on the learner’s strengths, i.e., what he can do today that he couldn’t do yesterday. Formative assessments are considered as “practice” for the students—they are not part of the student’s grade as the purpose is to assist teachers to know where to go next with instruction for each student.

Characteristics of Developmentally Appropriate or Formative Assessments

Sowers (2000) states that formative assessments:

1. Occur continuously over time.
2. Use a variety of means, with a focus on teacher observation and written documentation.
3. Focus on the student’s cognitive development and learning strengths, rather than on deficiencies.
4. Afford the teacher useful information to inform curriculum and instructional decisions.
5. Integrate with the teaching process.
6. Demonstrate and allow for sensitivity toward individual, cultural, and linguistic diversity.

Examples of Formative Assessment

Formative assessments can take the shape of a variety of formats (Sowers, 2000):

1. Teacher observation
2. Student journals/slate journals
3. Portfolios/work samples
4. Conferences and interviews
5. Student record keeping
6. Language samples of ELL
7. Parent observation and report

Additional means specific to Indiana include:

8. Formative common assessments, e.g., Acuity
9. Progress monitoring assessments, e.g., Wireless Generation

◆ *Discussion:*

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest, at what level do the teachers in your district use formative assessments to guide instructional decisions? Does the number differ by grade level or school? If so, why might that be?
2. If teachers do not use formative assessments, what do they use to determine if changes in their instruction are needed? Do their lesson plans and textbooks guide their instructional decision making, allowing for little change in pace or differentiation for students?
3. Review the professional development schedule for the past three years. How often was formative assessment a topic?
4. What follow up (e.g., modeling, coaching) was provided to teachers in an effort to increase their use of, and the quality of their formative assessments?
5. When conducting classroom walk-throughs, are principals able to recognize the quality of formative assessments and assist their teachers in improving, as needed?

✓ *Suggestion:* Consider your answers when developing your district improvement/action plan. What needs to change regarding formative assessments?

Section V: Developing an Improvement/Action Plan

Using a Decision Tree

The information and data obtained now becomes the critical foundation for developing the improvement or action plan. The template for the district improvement plan is found beginning on page 40. A completed sample district improvement plan begins on page 46. The development of the plan is a four-step process that includes the information about your district and the student data that were disaggregated today along with that the team—including members from the schools—will add when returning back to work. .

The facilitator will lead you through the steps of developing the plan, which is based on a decision tree. A decision tree is a process of moving from one step to the next based on decisions made at the previous step. Of the four steps, described below, your team has completed parts of the first three through the activities completed today.

Step 1: List student groups not meeting AYP by school levels.

Step 2: Disaggregate the student data and list the findings.

Step 3: Determine probable causes of the findings and current supports for the students in:

- The use of formative assessments/progress monitoring and data to plan instruction, including corresponding professional development for staff.
- The instruction and interventions, including corresponding professional development for staff.
- The curriculum, including corresponding professional development for staff.

Step 4: Develop the action plan, including:

- AYP target goals of student subgroups not meeting AYP for this year and next year.
- Address the questions:
 - What strategies will be added or changed to support school improvement?
 - What curricular area does the strategy support?
 - Who are the intended implementers of the strategy?
 - What resources will be put in place to support the implementers?
 - How and when will the effectiveness of the strategy be measured in terms of teachers' improved instruction, curriculum, and use of data to inform instruction?
 - What additional support will be provided to fully and consistently implement the strategy?
- Address “Additional Requirements” of district improvement plans according to NCLB.

District Improvement/Action Plan Template—Year 1

Corporation/District

Number

Date

Person Submitting Plan

Step 1:
Student groups
not meeting
AYP by school
levels

Step 2:
Findings from
disaggregated
data for
student groups

Step 3:

Potential Causes of Student Groups Not Meeting AYP:

Our Current Supports to Teachers, Students, and Schools in These Areas

- a1. **Formative assessments, progress monitoring,** and **data** to inform instruction
- a2. Including corresponding professional development for staff

- b1. **Instruction and interventions**
- b2. Including corresponding professional development for staff

- c1. **Curriculum**—aligned within and across grade levels and to state standards; rigorous; students have access to
- c2. Corresponding professional development for staff

Step 4: Action Plan

Student Group Not Meeting AYP:

2009–10 Goal:

Rationale:

2010–11 Goal:

Rationale:

What Strategy Will Be Added or Changed to Support School Improvement?	What Curricular Area Does the Strategy Support?	Who Are the Intended Implementers of the Strategy?	What Resources Will Be Put in Place to Support the Implementers? Place “D” Beside Those That Are the District’s Responsibility.	How and When Will the Strategy’s Effectiveness Be Measured in Teachers’ Improved Instruction, Curriculum, and Use of Data?	What Additional Support Will Be Provided to Fully and Consistently Implement the Strategy?

Source: Agullard, K., & Goughnour, D., (2006). *Central office inquiry: Assessing organization, roles, and functions to support school improvement*. San Francisco: WestEd.

Student Group Not Meeting AYP:

2009–10 Goal:

Rationale:

2010–11 Goal:

Rationale:

What Strategy Will Be Added or Changed to Support School Improvement?	What Curricular Area Does the Strategy Support?	Who Are the Intended Implementers of the Strategy?	What Resources Will Be Put in Place to Support the Implementers? Place “D” Beside Those That Are the District’s Responsibility.	How and When Will the Strategy’s Effectiveness Be Measured in Teachers’ Improved Instruction, Curriculum, and Use of Data?	What Additional Support Will Be Provided to Fully and Consistently Implement the Strategy?

Source: Agullard, K., & Goughnour, D., (2006). *Central office inquiry: Assessing organization, roles, and functions to support school improvement*. San Francisco: WestEd.

Additional Requirements

1. Reread your plan to ensure that it includes the district's response to the following:

- *Curriculum*: as it relates to students not meeting AYP
- *Instruction*: research-based as it relates to students not meeting AYP
- *Formal Assessments*: as it relates to students not meeting AYP
- *Use of Data* to make decisions: as it relates to students not meeting AYP

➤ If these are not clearly addressed in the plan, do so below, **as required by NCLB**:

2. Review the following topics, which also are required by NCLB. If these are not addressed in the above plan, write a short narrative in the space provided.

- *Extended Day, Year, or Dedicated Time During the Day*: For students not meeting AYP (as appropriate):

- *Parental Involvement*: For parents of students not meeting AYP. Do not include routine events for all parents (e.g., PTA, carnivals) or those that are required by law (e.g., IEP meetings).

We agree to implement this plan and to set aside and expend 10 percent of Title I funds as required of LEAs in improvement.

School Corporation

Superintendent's Signature

Date

Signatures of LEA Improvement/Action Plan Committee

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Sample District Improvement/Action Plan Template—Year 1

Corporation/District

Everglades School District

Number

777

Date

3/28/09

Person Submitting Plan

Betsy Crocodile, Lead for District Improvement

Step 1: Student groups not meeting AYP by school levels

1. Students with disabilities: Elementary, Middle, High
2. Students learning English as an additional language: Middle, High

Step 2: Findings from disaggregated data for student groups

1. The number of students identified with communication disorders (CD) decreases dramatically at fourth grade.
2. Students with CD score significantly lower than their non-CD peers on E/LA formative assessments, despite no cognitive limitations.
3. Eighty-five percent of students with CD, Grades 1–12, are removed from regular class less than 21% of the day.
4. Students identified with autism (AUT) are served in separate schools.
5. The number of students identified with learning disabilities (LD) increases dramatically at fourth grade.
6. Seventy-five percent of students identified with LD in Grades 4–12 are males.
7. Thirty percent of students with LD drop-out of school between freshman and senior years.
8. In fourth and fifth grades, 33% of students with LD are removed from the regular class for greater than 60% of the day.
9. After eighth grade, 70% of students with LD are removed from the regular class for greater than 60% of the day.

[Note: Data findings for students learning English as an additional language would be presented next.]

Step 3:

Potential Causes of Student Groups not Meeting AYP: Students With disabilities Our Current District Supports to Schools in These Areas

- a1. **Formative assessments, progress monitoring, and data** used to inform instruction
- a2. Corresponding professional development for staff

- b1. **Instruction and interventions**—engaging, cognitively-demanding, differentiated
- b2. Corresponding professional development for staff

- c1. **Curriculum**—aligned within and across grade levels and to state standards; rigorous; students have access to
- c2. Corresponding professional development for staff

Formative Assessments/Progress Monitoring—Data-Driven Decision Making: Teachers use textbook end-of-chapter tests; no use of formative assessments; no professional development on topic provided; no examination of student work by teacher grade-level teams.

Results for students:

- 1) Evidence of students' daily or weekly progress is not obtained.
- 2) Specific area of student's misunderstanding or struggle not known to teachers.
- 3) Individual assistance and instruction not provided to match student's needs.
- 4) Leads to acting out in classroom, low attendance, and dropping out.

b. Instruction/Intervention: Teachers received a half-day workshop on differentiated instruction at beginning of year. No follow up to classroom provided (e.g., coaching). Principals do not observe for differentiated instructional strategies in classrooms.

Results for students:

- 1) Experience no real change in instructional strategies to meet their needs.
- 2) Emotional "shut down;" cannot respond to teachers' expectations/requirements.
- 3) Leads to acting out in class, low attendance, and dropping out.

c. Curriculum: Is a list of the E/LA standards. Teachers do not meet to discuss meaning of standards. No discussion or documentation of underlying learning needed to master a standard. Teachers do not adjust the standards or the curriculum based on individual student needs.

Results for students:

- 1) All students face similar teacher expectations. Some students are not challenged enough; others continually struggle.
- 2) Results in boredom for some students, discouragement for others.
- 3) Leads to acting out in the classroom, low attendance, and dropping out.

Step 4: Action Plan

Student Group Not Meeting AYP: Students with disabilities: Elementary, Middle, High School

2009–10 Goal: 80% of students with communication disorders in Grades 1–3 will reach benchmark levels (green) on Wireless Generation assessments.

Rationale: Currently, 70% of students with communication disorders are at benchmark levels. Because the students are not cognitively impaired, they have a high potential of improving in E/LA. A 10% increase is possible.

2010–11 Goal: 90% of students with communication disorders in Grades 1–3 will reach benchmark levels

Rationale: Because cognitively functioning is not impaired, almost all students should achieve benchmark or above.

What Strategy Will Be Added or Changed to Support School Improvement?	What Curricular Area Does the Strategy Support?	Who Are the Intended Implementers of the Strategy?	What Resources Will Be Put in Place to Support the Implementers? Place “D” Beside Those That Are the District’s Responsibility.	How and When Will the Strategy’s Effectiveness Be Measured in Teachers’ Improved Instruction, Curriculum, and Use of Data?	What Additional Support Will Be Provided to Fully and Consistently Implement the Strategy?
<p><i>Lower Elementary:</i> Wireless Generation formative assessments</p> <p>[Note: Strategies for upper elementary, middle and high school would be added below.]</p>	English language arts, K–3	Classroom teachers, K–3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. D: purchase WG assessments; ensure school has adequate technology 2. D: provide three days training by WG commercial staff 3. D: allow for two, half-day visit to neighbor district’s school that has used WG for two years 4. D: provide expert data coach every Monday to assist teachers in reviewing WG results and creating student groups 5. Time for K–3 teachers to hold weekly, grade-level meetings to discuss WG results and plan instruction 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teacher has ability to technologically use WG: WG commercial staff assess b. Teacher completes a single assessment and enters data into the Palm Pilot within five-minute time span; data coach monitors c. Teacher downloads information and creates a variety of reports; data coach monitors d. Teacher plans with other teachers, appropriate student groupings and instruction using data; grade-level lead teacher assesses 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. D: pays for additional WG training b. D: releases data coach to provide more practice/mentoring and teach “short cuts” c. D: releases data coach to provide more practice/mentoring d. D: releases special education teacher to provide assistance with differentiated instructional planning

Source: Agullard, K., & Goughnour, D., (2006). *Central office inquiry: Assessing organization, roles, and functions to support school improvement*. San Francisco: WestEd.

Additional Requirements

3. Reread your plan to ensure that it includes the district's response to the following:

- *Curriculum*: as it relates to students not meeting AYP
- *Instruction*: research-based as it relates to students not meeting AYP
- *Formal assessments*: as it relates to students not meeting AYP
- *Use of data* to make decisions: as it relates to students not meeting AYP

➤ If these are not clearly addressed in the plan, do so below, **as required by NCLB**:

[See prior pages]

4. Review the following topics that are also required by NCLB. If these are not addressed in the above plan, write a short narrative in the space provided.

- *Extended Day, Year, or Dedicated Time During the Day*: For students not meeting AYP (as appropriate):

Second- and third-grade students identified as CD and performing benchmark are provided with 45 minutes of extended day two days a week, September through November. This intensive work early in the year has proven in the past two years to allow a number of students up to benchmark.

- *Parental Involvement*: For parents of students not meeting AYP. Do not include routine events for all parents (e.g., PTA, carnivals) or those that are required by law (e.g., IEP meetings).

Parents of first-grade students with CD are invited to two fall trainings coconducted by the speech and language therapist and classroom teachers. The trainings include information about developmental stages of speech and language development; activities for extending speech and language skills at home; and the relationship of speech (articulation) and phonemic awareness.

Attendance at the first session was 50 percent of the parents and 44 percent at the second session. All but two parents who attended the first session also attended the second.

We agree to implement this plan and to set aside and expend 10 percent of Title I funds as required of LEAs in improvement.

School Corporation

Superintendent's Signature

Date

Signatures of LEA Improvement/Action Plan Committee

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

Name Title/Role

